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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/711,547	09/24/2004	Michael Poindexter	1644.01	5546
21901	7590	05/05/2005	EXAMINER	
SMITH & HOPEN PA 15950 BAY VISTA DRIVE SUITE 220 CLEARWATER, FL 33760			VANATTA, AMY B	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3765		

DATE MAILED: 05/05/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/711,547	POINDEXTER ET AL.
	Examiner Amy B. Vanatta	Art Unit 3765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 February 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1 and 3-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1 and 3-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 24 September 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11092004</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 7 is rendered indefinite by the recitation "further comprising sleeve panels" formed of an absorptive material. It is unclear whether these sleeve panels are the same sleeve panels which were previously recited in claim 1. If this is the case, the claim should be amended to more precisely claim this. If the shoulder panels of claim 7 are distinct separate structures from the sleeve panels which were previously recited, the structural relationship between these sleeve panels and those of claim 1 should be further recited, because these additional sleeve panels are confusing.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year, prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Art Unit: 3765

4. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Beauchamp et al (US 4,995,116).

Beauchamp et al disclose a protective garment in the form of a cape having an outer surface and an inner surface, including a back panel (16) having an upper and a lower edge, a pair of shoulder panels (18) extending from the upper edge of the back panel, and a neck opening (22) as claimed. The garment has two chest panels (12 and 14) each having a medial and lateral side and depending from the shoulder panels as claimed. There is a longitudinal opening (24) between the chest panels. Each shoulder panel has a medial end and a lateral end; the lateral end of the shoulder panel may be seen to overlie the outer edge of the wearer's shoulder (proximate the lead line from reference numeral 18 as shown in Fig. 3), and to be integrally attached to a sleeve panel, which is seen to extend downwards therefrom (see Fig. 3). Thus, the construction of the garment of Beauchamp is seen in Fig. 3 to include shoulder panels and integrally formed sleeve panels which extend from the lateral ends of the shoulder panels and from the back panel, each sleeve panel extending partially over the wearer's upper arm as in claim 1 (see Fig. 3). The embodiment of Fig. 4 of Beauchamp shows sleeve panels which are longer than those of Fig. 3, thus covering the arm to the region of the elbow. The chest panels define a generally longitudinal opening between each chest panel and the back panel, as shown in Figs. 1-3 of Beauchamp. A fastener (26) is associated with at least one of the medial sides of the chest panels as claimed. The fastener joins the chest panels together in overlapping fashion along the longitudinal opening (24). The fastener 26 is disclosed as a hook and loop fastener (col. 3, line 52)

as in claim 3. Beauchamp discloses that the cape is made of light weight fabric (col. 4, line 22), including the shoulder panels, chest panels, and sleeve panels since these panels form the cape of Beauchamp. Beauchamp discloses that the cape may be made of cotton (see col. 6, line 37). Cotton is inherently absorbent. Thus, the shoulder panels, chest panels, and sleeve panels are formed of an "absorptive material" (i.e. cotton), as in claims 5-7.

5. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Paolacci (Des. 412,388).

Paolacci discloses a protective garment in the form of a cape having an outer surface and an inner surface, including a panel (shown in Fig. 1) having an upper and a lower edge, a pair of shoulder panels extending from the upper edge of this panel, and a neck opening as claimed. The garment has two panels (shown in Fig. 2) each having a medial and lateral side and depending from the shoulder panels as claimed. The recitation of the first claimed panel as being a "back" panel and the two opposing panels as being "chest" panels amounts to the intended use of the garment to the extent that these panels cover the back and chest of the wearer when worn with the opening at the front. To this extent, the garment of Paolacci has the claimed structure since it clearly is capable of being worn with the opening facing either the front or the back of the wearer. If the opening is worn facing the front of the wearer, the panels shown in Fig. 2 form chest panels and the panel of Fig. 1 forms a back panel as claimed. Additionally, when viewed from the direction as in Fig. 2 of Paolacci, the panel furthest from the viewer

forms a back panel as claimed, and the two opposed front panels form chest panels to the extent claimed. There is a longitudinal opening between these "chest" panels, as shown in Fig. 2, and longitudinal openings between each of these panels and the "back" panel, as shown in Figs. 2 and 9. Each shoulder panel has a medial end and a lateral end; the lateral end of the shoulder panel would overlie the outer edge of the wearer's shoulder when worn, and is integrally attached to a sleeve panel as shown in Fig. 2. Each sleeve panel extends over the wearer's upper arm and has an open bottom edge along most of its length (see Fig. 2), thus meeting the limitation of extending "partially over the user's upper arm" as in claim 1. A fastener (see Fig. 3) is associated with at least one of the medial sides of the "chest" panels as claimed. The fastener joins the chest panels together in overlapping fashion along the longitudinal opening.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paolacci (Des. 412,388) in view of Daniel (US 3,798,674).

Paolacci discloses a protective garment in the form of a beauty salon cape. Paolacci does not disclose of what material the cape is made. Daniel discloses a drape (10) for use in a beauty salon, and discloses that the drape may be formed out of

terry cloth or other absorbent material (col. 3, lines 46-47). Daniel discloses that the drape may be provided with a plastic liner to provide resistance to fluids (col. 3, lines 51-55). Protective capes for use in during hair styling are conventionally made of an absorbent outer layer with a waterproof liner as the inner layer in order to prevent liquid from running down the surface of the cape due to the absorbency of the outer layer and to provide protection for the wearer by preventing liquids from soaking through the cape due to the waterproof liner. By constructing the cape of Paolacci out of such material, the shoulder panels, chest panels, and back panels would be formed of absorptive material as in claims 5-7, and the cape would include a fluid-resistant inner layer as in claim 4. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the cape of Paolacci out of material comprising an outer layer of absorbent material having a liner of fluid-resistant material, such as disclosed by Daniel, in order to provide optimal protection for the wearer from liquids.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-7 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Information Disclosure Statement

9. The information disclosure statement filed 11/9/2004 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.97(c) because it lacks the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(p) or a statement as

specified in 37 CFR 1.97(e). It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
11. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Amy B. Vanatta whose telephone number is 571-272-4995. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Calvert can be reached on 571-272-4983. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Amy B. Vanatta
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3765